

Haftarah - Parshat BaMidbar (Hosea 2:1-22)

based on the translations of

Robert Alter, Aryeh Kaplan, Stone Edition Tanach, JPS, Jerusalem Bible, New English Bible, New King James Bible

modeled after the recording in *Navigating the Bible II*:

<https://bible.ort.org/books/haftarotd4.asp?action=displaypage&book=4&chapter=2&verse=1&portion=38>

2:1 [And they will yet be], in number—[the children of Israel]—like the sand of the sea, that cannot be measured,  
[and that] [cannot be counted], [and it shall happen], [in those places] [where it was said] of them “[Not *My* people] [are you]”,  
it will be said of them, “children of *El Chai*”—the living God.

2 [Then they will be gathered]—[the children of Judah] [and the children of Israel]—together.

[They shall set] [over themselves] a single head, [and go up] [from the lands\*],

\*Alter claims it should be plural: the *lands* of their exile

since great indeed is the day of Jezreel (*meaning*: “God will sow”).

3 Say to your brothers, “[*Ammi*—my people]”, [and to your sisters], “[*Ruchamah*—[you have received mercy]”.

4 [Bring a case] [against your mother]: [rebuke her]. For she is not My wife, and I [am surely] [not her husband].

[Let her take off] her harlotries [from her face], and her adultery from between her breasts.

5 [Lest I strip her] naked, [and make her just as bare] [as on the day] [that she was born],

[and I will turn her] [into a desert], [and make her] into a land [without water], [and suffer her] [to die of thirst].

6 [As for her children] [I will show them] no mercy, since children of harlotry [is what they are].

7 [For she played] the whore—their mother. She who conceived them [made a disgrace of herself]. Indeed [this is what she said]:

”[I’m going to go] after my lovers, [who give me] my bread [and my water], my wool and my linen, my oil [and my drink].”

8 [Because of these things], know that I will block your way [with a hedge of thorns].

[I will build against her] a wall, [and then her paths], she will not find.

9 [She will run after] her lovers, [but *she* will not] [catch them]. [She will look for them], but them [she will surely not find].

[Then she will say], “[I will go] and return to my husband—[the first one],

[because indeed] | better [it was for me] [at *that* time], [than it is now].

2:10 For she was not aware that [it was I] who bestowed [upon her] [the new grain], the wine, [and the fresh oil], and silver [I did] [lavish on her], and gold that they fashioned for Baal.

11 Hence [I will return], [and take back] My corn [in its time], [and My wine] [in its season], [and take away] My wool and My linen [that covered up] her nakedness.

12 [And now you will see]: I will lay bare her nakedness in the eyes of her lovers, [and no man] will rescue her from My hand.

13 [I will put an end] [to all her rejoicing], her festivals, [her new moons] [and her sabbaths]—[all of her] [appointed times].

14 [I will thus lay waste] her vines [as well as] [her fig trees] of which [she said these words]:

“[A whore’s pay] [these are] for me. [They were given to me] [by my lovers].”

NOTE: Hebrew texts differ in the tropes beginning vv. 14 & 15

[I will turn them into] a scrubland (*ya’ar*). [They will be eaten up] by the beasts of the field.

15 [I will make] [a reckoning against her] [for the days] of the Baalim, when she [burned incense] [to them], [and dressed up] with earrings and jewelry, [and she kept] going [after her lovers]. But *Me* they forgot, [thus speaks YHWH].

16 [Because of all these things], [know that] [I Myself] [will beguile her], [and will bring her] [into the wilderness].

[And I will speak] [right to her heart].

17 [I will give] [to her] her vineyards [from there], and the valley of Achor (“troubling”) as [a doorway to hope] (*petach tikvah*).

[She shall] [respond there] [as in the days] of her youth, [as in the day] she came up from the land of Egypt.

18 [It will be] [on that day]—[thus says YHWH]—[that you will call Me] “[*Ishi*—my husband]”.

You will not address Me any more [as “*Baali*—my master”].

19 [For I will take away] the names of the Baalim [from her lips]. They won’t be mentioned any longer [by their names].

20 [I will make] [for them] a covenant on that day [with the beasts] of the field and with the birds of the heavens, [and with the creeping things] of the earth. [Both bow] and sword [and all warfare] [I will cast out] [from the earth].

[I will lay her down] in safety.

21 I will betrothe you to Me forever. [I will betrothe you] to Me in right and in justice, [in steadfast love] [and in mercy].

22 I will betrothe you to Me in faithfulness, [end melody] [and you shall know] [that I am YHWH].

## Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh *or* yetiv kadma *or* pashta gersh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, gersh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh ( <i>or</i> : azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
Renew our days	She weeps bitterly	a fire-offering to God

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalsholet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “*God*” or “*Adonai*”.

*The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:*

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)  
Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)  
Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)  
The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)  
JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)  
Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)  
Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series  
Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)  
The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)  
The New King James Bible (1982)